

Questions of Privilege

A. INTRODUCTORY

§ 1. In General

The tradition of Anglo-American parliamentary procedure recognizes the privileged status of questions related to the honor and security of a deliberative body and its members. The House has accorded privileged status to such questions by Rule IX,⁽¹⁾ which provides:

Questions of privilege shall be, first, those affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings; second, the rights, reputation, and conduct of Members, individually, in their representative capacity only; and shall have precedence of all other questions, except motions to adjourn.⁽²⁾

1. *House Rules and Manual* §661 (1973). For pre-1936 rulings on questions of privilege, see 3 Hinds' Precedents §§2521-2725, and 6 Cannon's Precedents §§553-622.
2. See 3 Hinds' Precedents §2521, noting that the object of Rule IX was to

Pursuant to the rule, questions of privilege are divided into two classes—the first pertaining to the House collectively, the second pertaining to the Members individually. Whenever a question of privilege is properly raised on the floor by a Member, the Speaker must entertain the question and rule on its admissibility. And the disposition of such questions must precede the consideration of any other question except the motion to adjourn.⁽³⁾

prevent the loss of time which had theretofore resulted from Members' obtaining the floor for a speech under the pretext of raising a question of privilege.

3. Precedence of the question, see §5, *infra*.